

**REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Before addressing the subject matter of the claims, a discussion of the disclosure in Applicant's specification is provided. In one aspect of this disclosure, a fastening element is used to attach a winch to the surface of a vessel. A retaining element is used for retaining the fastening element in place with respect to a winch. This retaining element may have an engagement portion, which provides additional securing of the fastening with respect to the appliance by being jammed between the fastening element and a hole in the appliance. See Page 6, lines 16-21. In the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 2, a winch 12 is attached to a deck 32 by a screw 36, which is retained in a hole 42 of the winch base 34. A lock washer 38 is also provided for retaining the screw 36 in place. This lock washer includes an engagement portion 46. As shown, the engagement portion 46 protrudes into the hole 42.

Claim 1 stands rejected as anticipated by Reynolds. The Official Action rejected Claim 1 based on the disclosed assembly of a bolt 22 and spring washer 23. In particular, the Official Action notes that the fastening element (22) is held against rotation by the retaining element (23) up to a threshold torque.

Claim 1 is directed to an assembly of a winch having a combination of features, including one or more threaded fastening elements, one or more retaining elements, and a winch having one or more apertures, wherein each fastening element is retained in a respective one of the apertures and held against rotation with respect to the winch up to a threshold torque by a respective one of the

retaining elements, and at least an engagement portion of the retaining element is jammed between the threaded fastening element and the aperture in the winch, protruding into the aperture.

The spring washer 23 in Reynolds does not have an engagement portion that is jammed between the bolt 23 and the aperture of the shaft 4 that receives the bolt 23, nor an engagement portion that protrudes into the aperture of shaft 4. The spring washer 23, or for that matter the retaining washer 21, are placed between the bolt head and the shaft 4 but do not include an engagement portion that is jammed between the threaded fastening element and the aperture in the winch, nor does it protrude into the aperture. Reynolds therefore cannot anticipate Claim 1. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claim 1 be withdrawn and this claim allowed.

Claim 10 stands rejected as anticipated by Reynolds. Claim 10 is directed to an assembly of a sailboat winch having a combination of features, including one or more screws and one or more lock washers, wherein the sailboat winch has one or more mounting apertures, each screw being retained in a respective one of the apertures and being held against rotation with respect to the winch up to a threshold torque by a respective one of the lock washers, thereby allowing rotation of the screw at torques higher than the threshold torque, wherein at least an engagement portion of the lock washer is jammed between the screw and the aperture in the winch, protruding into the aperture. For similar reasons as those discussed above for Claim 1, Reynolds also does not anticipate Claim 10. Withdrawal of the rejection to Claim 10 and allowance of this claim is earnestly solicited.

Claim 16 stands rejected as anticipated by Reynolds. Claim 16 is directed to a method of producing an assembly of a winch having one or more apertures, one or more threaded fastening elements, and one or more retaining elements. The

method has a combination of features, including retaining each threaded fastening element in a respective one of the apertures and holding the fastening elements against rotation with respect to the winch up to a threshold torque using a respective one of the retaining elements, wherein at least an engagement portion of the retaining element is jammed between the threaded fastening element and the aperture in the winch, protruding into the aperture. For similar reasons as those discussed above for Claim 1, Reynolds also does not anticipate Claim 16. Withdrawal of the rejection to Claim 16 and allowance of this claim is earnestly solicited.

Claim 20 stands rejected as anticipated by Reynolds. Claim 20 is directed to an assembly of a sailboat windlass and one or more screws and one or more lock washers, wherein the sailboat windlass is for attachment to a deck of a sailboat using the screws, and wherein the windlass has one or more mounting apertures, each screw being retained in a respective one of the apertures and being held against rotation with respect to the windlass up to a threshold torque by a respective one of the lock washers, wherein at least an engagement portion of the lock washer is jammed between the threaded fastening element and the aperture in the windlass, protruding into the aperture. For similar reasons as those discussed above for Claim 1, Reynolds also does not anticipate Claim 20. Withdrawal of the rejection to Claim 20 and allowance of this claim is earnestly solicited.


Claims 3-9 and 17-19 depend from Claims 1 and 16, respectively and recite additional features of the invention that further distinguish over the prior art. Due to their dependence on an allowable claim, it is not necessary at this time to discuss the features of Claims 3-9 and 17-19 that further distinguish over the prior art. Allowance of Claims 3-9 and 17-19 is earnestly solicited.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application, the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL PC

Date: October 12, 2006

By:   
James L. Reed  
Registration No. 43,877

P.O. Box 1404  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404  
(703) 836-6620